

**Outer Continental Shelf (OCS)
Scientific Committee Meeting
Wednesday, April 27, 2005
Embassy Suites Hotel Dulles - North
Dulles, Virginia**

8:00 a.m. – 8:15 a.m.	Welcome and Introductions Dr. Lynda Shapiro, Chair, OCS Scientific Committee Dr. James Kendall, MMS Chief Scientist and Executive Secretary of the OCS SC
8:15 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.	Subcommittee Reports & Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deepwater – Dr. William Schroeder, Member, Deepwater Subcommittee• Arctic – Dr. Michael Castellini, Subcommittee Chair• Observations of the MMS/EPA/DOI Hypoxia Meeting – Drs. Bob Diaz and Mary Scranton, Meeting Observers
9:15 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.	MMS Archaeological Studies Fulfilling MMS Information Needs Dr. Melanie Stright, Historical Preservation Officer Dr. Jack Irion, MMS Gulf of Mexico OCS Region
10:15 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	Break
10:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.	Report from the last OCS Policy Committee Meeting Mr. Berry H. Tew, Chair, OCS Policy Committee
10:45 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	MMS Director's Presentation and Discussion with the Committee Ms. Johnnie Burton, Director, MMS
11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Lunch
1:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.	Some Highlights of the MMS <i>Environmental Studies Program</i> and our goal for the next day-and-half Mr. James Cimato, Acting Chief, Environmental Studies Program

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1:30 p.m. - 1:45 p.m. Charge to the Discipline Subcommittees
Dr. Lynda Shapiro; Chair, OCS Scientific Committee

Physical Sciences, Biology, and Socioeconomic Disciplines meet separately to discuss national and regional studies plans.

	Biology/Ecology Decommissioning	Physical Sciences Phys-O, Air Quality	Social Sciences
1:45 - 3:30	Pacific	Gulf of Mexico/HQ	Alaska
3:30 -4:00	Break	Break	Break

4:00 pm. – 5:30 p.m. Environmental Data Forum: *Think Globally, Act Locally!*
Managing MMS Data, *Today and in the Future*
Dr. Norm Froemer, MMS Environmental Division

Managing Environmental Data at a Global Level
Dr. Daphne G. Fautin, Professor, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology,
University of Kansas

Subcommittee Reports & Discussion

Deepwater.

In January 2005, the Deepwater Subcommittee met to review the progress of ongoing and planned MMS studies in the deep Gulf of Mexico, and discussed potential future directions for deepwater studies. MMS studies have provided very exceptional understanding of separate components of the deep Gulf ecosystem including geology, physical and chemical oceanography, and a broad range of living communities. All of these components are ecologically interdependent. The Deepwater Subcommittee recommends that the emphasis of future MMS deepwater studies begin to shift toward a more interdisciplinary ecosystem-level approach that integrates the structure and function of different habitats and communities with physical oceanographic processes. An ecosystem-level understanding of the Gulf is ultimately necessary for effective resource management and environmental stewardship.

Toward this objective we recommend that the OCS endorse the following agenda:

1. Support the proposed Chemo III Study to extend the investigation of chemosynthetic communities to deeper than 1000 m.
2. Facilitate and expedite the synthesis phase of the Gulf-wide DGoMB Study of soft sediment communities.
3. Coordinate future studies with other funding agencies that sponsor research in the Gulf.
4. Pursue agreements with the Mexican government, universities and Academy of Sciences to establish a framework of international cooperation for future studies in the Southern Gulf.

Arctic.

In February, 2005, the subcommittee met at the MMS facility in Anchorage, Alaska with various stakeholders, interested public members and scientific groups doing research in the region. Also invited to attend were specialists in several fields of potential upcoming MMS research areas. An update of major activities taking place in Alaska including the status of lease sales or development reviews, current science activities, and priority arctic science questions for consideration were discussed and presented to the committee. Several members of the subcommittee also attended the Information Transfer Meetings held by the Alaska MMS region in Anchorage in March.

MMS/EPA/DOI Hypoxia Meeting.

Last year EPA raised concerns about possible future increases in produced water discharges and unreasonable degradation of the marine environment in the context of issuing a NPDES General Permit in the Gulf of Mexico. The contribution of produced water to hypoxia, while expected to be very small, has not been directly investigated. An “Experts Meeting” on the subject was held to provide MMS and EPA with the latest information on hypoxia and produced water volume and composition. Invitees included members of EPA, MMS, DOE, oil industry representatives, invited researchers, and members of the MMS Scientific Committee. SC members were invited since the expectation was that discussions could lead to recommendations for research and external peer review would enhance the process. As facilitators and observers, Scientific Committee participation provided external peer review and critique of research designs under discussion. SC members also provided peer review of a related report on hypoxia and the contributions from produced water prepared by Dr. Nancy Rabalais.

MMS Archaeological Studies Fulfilling MMS Information Needs.

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, is Federal legislation developed to ensure that our Nation’s historical and archaeological properties are not lost through neglect or inadvertently destroyed by activities permitted or funded by Federal agencies. Specifically, the MMS, as a Federal bureau, is required to ensure that activities it funds (e.g., environmental studies) and activities it permits, such as lease sales, the drilling of oil and gas wells, and the construction of pipelines, do not damage significant archaeological sites in the Federal Outer Continental Shelf (OCS). To fulfill this mandate, the MMS has conducted archaeological baseline studies of the Atlantic, Pacific, and Gulf of Mexico continental shelves to define those areas where both historic shipwrecks and prehistoric archaeological sites are most likely to exist. The MMS has also conducted additional archaeological studies in the Gulf of Mexico Region to further refine the methods and technology employed to identify and evaluate archaeological resources on the OCS.

D. Report from the last OCS Policy Committee Meeting

Officers of the OCS Scientific Committee and the OCS Policy Committee routinely attend each other's meetings and give brief presentations on the various OCS issues they are involved with. Mr. Berry (Nick) Tew, presented the key discussion items from the OCS Policy Committee's November 2004 meeting.

Director's Presentation

As advisor to the Director, MMS, the Committee appreciates the opportunity to have a dialogue with the Director on ongoing and future issues, policies, and activities of the Bureau. This exchange not only keeps the Committee apprised of MMS direction but also offers an opportunity for the Committee to provide direct advice and guidance on matters as they relate to the Environmental Studies Program.

Some Highlights of the MMS *Environmental Studies Program* and Our Goal for the Next Day-and-Half .

The MMS Headquarters ESP presentation will outline the overall objectives of the meeting, the process by which the various disciplines fit together in the overall picture, and potential studies efforts and issues for the future.

Environmental Data Forum: *Think Globally, Act Locally!* Managing MMS Data, Today and in the Future.

During the past 30 or so years, MMS has invested over \$700,000,000 in its Environmental Studies Program (ESP). These efforts have produced a significant collection of information about the marine and coastal environments of the United States. Until recently, information from these studies was available only as individual paper documents, assorted CDs, and in-data warehouses, such as the National Ocean Data Center. In recent years, MMS has taken steps to make ESP information accessible digitally and through the Internet. These steps include making full text versions of final reports available over the Internet, developing a spatial interface to studies information, and incorporating ESP data into the MMS corporate database. These efforts will make ESP data more accessible and useful to its intended audience of users, including researchers, environmental analysts, and decision makers.

Environmental Data Forum: *Think Globally, Act Locally!* Managing Environmental Data at a Global Level.

The Census of Marine Life (CoML: www.coml.org) is an international project with four components. Field projects are designed to learn what lives in the ocean, the History of Marine Animal Populations (HMAP) studies, what did live in the ocean, and the Future of Marine Animal Populations (FMAP) is designed to project what will live in the oceans. The Ocean Biogeographic Information System (OBIS: www.iobis.org) is a distributed system serving data not only from CoML field projects, but also from individuals, museums, and agencies. HMAP and FMAP both use data from OBIS and contribute to it. Daphne Fautin chairs the US National Committee for CoML, is a member of the International Committee of OBIS, and was one of the original contributors of data ("Hexacorals of the World") to OBIS.

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Thursday, April 28, 2005
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	Interdisciplinary/ Biology/Ecology	Physical Sciences	Social Sciences
8:00- 9:30		Sand & Gravel	
9:30 - 10:00	Break	Break	Break
10:00 - 12:00	Alaska	Sand & Gravel	Gulf/HQ-Social Sciences
12:00 - 1:30	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
1:30 - 3:30	Gulf Biology	Alaska (Phys-O)	Gulf/HQ – Social Sciences
3:30 - 3:45	Break	Break	Break
3:45 - 5:30	Biol./Ecol. Chairs and MMS Recorder Finalize Recommendations	Physical Sciences Chairs and MMS Recorder Finalize Recommendations	Social Sciences Chairs and MMS Recorder Finalize Recommendations

**Outer Continental Shelf (OCS)
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Friday, April 29, 2005
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8:00 a.m. - 8:15 a.m.	Plenary Session Opening Comments, Chair, OCS SC
8:15 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.	Discipline Subcommittee Reports (20 minutes each) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Biology• Physical Oceanography• Socioeconomics Open Discussion of Subcommittee Reports
9:45 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.	Break
10:00 a.m. –11:00a.m.	Open Discussion of Subcommittee Reports-continued
11:00 a.m. –11:30a.m.	Public Comment
11:30 a.m. - 12:30p.m.	Committee Business <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Items for Letter to the Director• Emerging Issues/Topics of Interest• Other Business• Dates and locations for the next meeting
12:30 p.m.	Adjourn the meeting

Discipline Subcommittee Reports

Each Subcommittee will report on the national and regional studies plans that were discussed during the breakout sessions.

Committee Business

- The Committee will discuss and comment on the Subcommittee Reports.
- Items for the Letter to the Director will be submitted.
- Emerging Issues/Topics of Interest.
- Other business will be discussed.
- Possible dates and locations will be discussed for the next SC meeting.